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ABSTRACT

This collection contains five papers dealing with trends in changes in the structure and labor needs of corporations in the information age. The Introduction, by Ronald A. Kepple, outlines 10 points for reinventing the corporation in the information age and reviews them in the context of the community college. Forces that are converging to take corporate decision making out of the hands of management are discussed in Thomas W. Dwyer's paper "Revolution in the Workplace." "Needed Skills for the New Information Society," a paper by John S. Clatterbaugh, Jr., examines the feasibility of modifying the current educational system to address a new set of skills, in addition to the "back to basics" skills required in the job market of the new information society. Brenda J. McGolerick discusses the strategies developed by various corporations and educational institutions to reduce health care costs in a paper entitled "Health, Women, and the Information Society Corporation." In the final paper, "Summary and Conclusion," Ronald A. Kepple reviews the main points of the aforementioned papers and discusses why a seller's market will exist in the information society. (MN)

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A COLLOQUIUM REVIEW OF

Re-inventing the Corporation

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A COLLOQUIUM REVIEW OF

Re-inventing the Corporation

presented at
Hagerstown Junior College
Hagerstown, Maryland

on
May 15, 1986

sponsored by
The David Lee Teaching-Learning Center

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INTRODUCTION

Ronald A. Kepple

The theme of Re-inventing the Corporation is a simple and optimistic one. It is filled with many examples of how some businesses are learning to be successful in the information age. The ideas are rational and generally subscribe to common sense. Consider, for example, the authors' ten points in re-inventing the corporation. This list will be reviewed within the educational context of the community college.

1. The best and brightest people will gravitate toward those coporations that foster personal growth.
   At all levels education has tried to foster personal growth. Among educational institutions, however, community colleges have been specifically designed to meet the student where she or he is and to continue the growth process as far as possible.

2. The manager's new role is that of coach, teacher, and mentor.
   Even though education provides the model, sometimes we need to stop and remember our special assignment. Not only are we the teachers, but we also have to cheer on others to positions quite different and higher than our own. We must set admirable examples in thought and behavior.

3. The best people want ownership -- psychic and literal -- in a company; the best companies are providing it.
   Ours is a society which highly values ownership. Education has been prized because it represents, to quote a folk saying, "something that can't be taken away from you." Our challenge continues to be to let students know that what they are learning is not only ours, but theirs too.

4. Companies will increasingly turn to third-party contractors, shifting from hired labor to contract labor.
   Educational institutions have been doing this for quite some time. They are called part-time faculty. There is another aspect to third-party contracting which could apply to full-time employees. For them, it might not mean less job security or pay. It would mean lower administrative costs by eliminating some local personnel and finance offices and turning over those tasks to an outside company especially designed for that function.

INTRODUCTION (continued)

5. Authoritarian management is yielding to a networking, people style of management.
The best and brightest people don't like to get yelled at and dictated to. This is at the heart of the philosophy being suggested in the book. People are motivated to do good and can be trusted, and they are responsible. Faculty criticisms of administrators would become more difficult as decision-making responsibilities are shared.

6. Entrepreneurship within the corporations -- intrapreneurship -- is creating new products and new markets and revitalizing companies inside out.
Companies and educational institutions are discovering that altruism begins at home. If we want others to care for us, we first have to care for ourselves. There is first marketing inside the institution, followed by marketing outside the organization.

7. Quality will be paramount.
Nobody would say that quality is unimportant. Or as one American automobile maker says, "Quality is Job One." "Fix Or Repair Daily" loses its meaning. We must be encouraged to put our behavior where our mouth is, whether it's building cars, making decisions, or educating students.

8. Intuition and creativity are challenging the "it's all in the numbers" business-school philosophy.
Quality should come before quantity. We still have our version of "It's all in the numbers." It's called full-time equivalent (FTE). Appropriate answers might not always be found through bureaucratic standard operating procedure. Do we really need a great amount of research to find out what is needed? Answers are often the result of caring, thinking, and feeling people who are really involved. We often say we want creativity, but we are often reluctant to pay the initial bill which creativity often charges.

9. Large corporations are emulating the positive and productive qualities of small businesses.
One of the reasons why most community colleges have been so successful is because they are still small enough for everyone to know everyone else even if they don't want to know each other or be known.

INTRODUCTION (continued)

10. The dawn of the information economy has fostered a massive shift from infrastructure to quality of life.
What is meant by quality of life? Good climate, cultural opportunities, increasing opportunities for two-career couples, and good educational opportunities. To be a part of the formula for success in the information age, education plays an absolutely essential role.

In the sections which follow several writers express their views on the implications of re-inventing the corporation.

Thomas W. Dwyer	Revolution in the Workplace
John S. Clatterbaugh, Jr.	Needed Skills for the New Information Society
Brenda J. McGolerick	Health, Women, and the Information Society Corporation
Ronald A. Kepple	Summary and Conclusion

REVOLUTION IN THE WORKPLACE

Thomas W. Dwyer

Re-inventing work. A catchy phrase -- but pregnant with meaning. John Naisbitt has done a thorough job in examining and describing what is really a revolution in management-employee relations.

What is happening today (and what Naisbitt predicts will come on with a rush in the future) has been postulated by management scientists over the past sixty years. People like Elton Mayo (in his famous Hawthorne experiments), Maslow, McGregor, Drucker, and Hertzberg have sounded a constant theme, "Human beings are highly motivated and the most productive when they operate in an environment where they feel appreciated and are allowed as much control over their work as possible."

However, with our entrenched management system which embodies top-down and not bottom-up organizational activity, none of these theories were allowed to work fully. There was much discussion about them, much time and money spent, but, it is safe to say that, with some notable exceptions, we really didn't make full use of them.

Today, however, we are beginning to recognize a confluence of forces which are taking the decision out of the hands of management. These theories will now become necessary instruments of survival.

The most significant of these forces are:

As we move into the Information Age, the realization that human capital, as a strategic resource, is becoming more important than financial capital.

New values and economic necessity. In order to compete in a global economy we will require a more competitive, more productive work force. This will force people to understand and accept the humanistic values mentioned above.

The development of a seller's market for employment seekers because of the shortage of workers in the 1990's and into the twenty-first century.

The computer, which allows instantaneous access to information, is rapidly causing the demise of middle management. This will allow

REVOLUTION IN THE WORKPLACE (continued)

broader spans of control and wider geographical scope of management. This will reduce the amount of time spent with subordinates and allow people to run their jobs with a minimum of direction.

Tomorrow's work force will be more variegated, better educated, more mobile, and more independent than the old. No longer will security be a major reason for holding a job.

Corporate managers are coming to realize that, in light of these facts, they are dealing with a work force which must be reckoned with. In order to attract and retain the best people and keep them productive, they will have to be provided with the work arrangements they require.

We are no longer dealing principally with males who are heads of households where the wife stays at home. We are dealing with situations where both spouses work, single parents, an increasing number of women and minorities, older people (many of whom have retired and reentered the work force), and people who have continuing desires and needs for more education and training.

So, where does this lead us?

What we see developing is an increasing array of conditions and concessions which an old-line manager might have trouble understanding, much less accepting. This array includes flexible time schedules, health and benefit plans tailored to individual preference, special plans for older workers, job sharing, permanent part-time workers, the use of retired people utilizing "Job Banks," and tuition reimbursement, to name the most popular. In other words, no longer do we try to make the worker fit the job. Increasingly, we are trying to adjust the job to fit the worker.

The results thus far, although perhaps predictable, have been surprising. Absenteeism and tardiness have been reduced. Workers are happier, highly motivated, more creative, and productive.

Expediency is forcing managers to embrace a philosophy we have known for years: "Human beings are highly motivated and the most productive when they operate in an environment where they feel appreciated and are allowed as much control over their work as possible."

REVOLUTION IN THE WORKPLACE (continued)

Naisbitt uses the expression, "Work should be fun." Perhaps we might look at this another way by calling forth the old country saying "It ain't work unless you'd rather be doin' somethin' else." In any event, the job itself and its environment, under the conditions described above, will be providing more satisfaction, stimulation, interest, and productivity than ever before.

Is this utopia? Not really. Management will not bring these things to pass from any feelings of extreme altruism but because they represent good, hard-headed business thinking. We'll still have management structure. We'll still need broad direction and goal setting from the top. We'll still have disciplinary problems and subperformers who will have to be let go. However, we even see signs of enlightened handling of difficult cases, such as practiced by Tampa Electric Company, a public utility in Florida. They have a practice of sending difficult employees home for a day, with pay, to consider whether they want to change their performance or seek employment with another company. Experience, thus far, has indicated this has been very successful.

Will this revolution occur in the immediate future? My feeling is that it will not; but occur, it will. We can see faint stirrings of it already. As we move into the twenty-first century, the workplace will be substantially different than it is now.

What about unions? Naisbitt states bluntly, "The union movement is dead." I would paraphrase that to, "The need for a union will no longer exist in certain companies." Certainly the traditional adversarial relationship between unions and management will gradually disappear as we face employee shortages. Enlightened management will see to this. As we move into the Information Age, the lines between labor and management will become less distinct. Unions constantly have to justify their existence. They will find this harder to do. The fact that employees will find more motivation in their jobs and will be able to shop for job conditions favorable to them, as individuals, will dim the luster of union membership.

In bringing about this revolution in the workplace, we will certainly be changing the employee's perception of work. Perhaps, as Naisbitt says, we may even be re-inventing it.

NEEDED SKILLS FOR THE NEW INFORMATION SOCIETY

John S. Clatterbaugh, Jr.

Naisbitt and Aburdene are very emphatic and fairly specific about the skills needed by the new information society. Our educational system must produce a skilled work force -- an educated work force. An unskilled (uneducated) workforce is considered a definite obstacle to the promise of a prosperous society.

The basic inference of the authors is that as we re-invent the corporation, we must re-invent our educational system. A modest and feasible approach would be to modify our present educational system, enabling it to incorporate some additional skills.

Remodification would be called for as our society demands changes. The problem is that educational system change or modification often lags far behind the demands of society -- even the industrial society, and that educational systems tend to discard the functioning components along with the nonfunctional components, and then re-invent a totally new system.

According to Naisbitt and Aburdene, a new set of skills in addition to the "back to basics" set of skills will be needed for workers preparing to compete and prosper in the job market of the new information society. Of primary importance is what the authors refer to as TLC. Defined, TLC means learning how to think, learning how to be creative, and learning how to learn. Learning how to learn is something that is becoming increasingly important in postsecondary education, especially the community college. We define this as "lifelong learning."

Numerous studies prove that young adults with only a high school diploma are failing to secure and hold jobs because of their inability to function in areas demanding communications and thinking skills. A recent survey of Washington County, Maryland, employers conducted by the Washington County Advisory Council for Vocational-Technical Education would support the conclusion of such studies. The results of the survey mentioned above show that 56 percent of the employers felt that the ability to communicate effectively was of critical importance, while 59 percent felt that the ability to read and write effectively were critical skills needed by the average employee.

NEEDED SKILLS FOR THE NEW INFORMATION SOCIETY (continued)

Re-inventing the Corporation praises the current educational reform movement and describes it as a bottom-up trend. A bottom-up trend is defined as a grass roots movement, not imposed by the federal government as was the "Sputnik" movement or "space race" of 1957. However, Naisbitt failed to point out that some grass roots projects initiated by the Excellence Commission's report is apt to progress much slower and tend to be more localized than those movements concerned with national defense. The Excellence Commission objectives are of local concern rather than of national concern. With the Sputnik syndrome, the matter of national defense was the prime motivating factor for rapid change. Americans tend to respond quickly to a national crisis.

The authors are of the opinion that the new skills for the information age, i.e., thinking, learning, and creating, can be taught, learned, and developed in the majority of academic subjects offered on the secondary and postsecondary levels. Also, these three skills could be taught and learned as a subject in itself as demonstrated by Dr. Lipman's[1] program conducted in New Jersey.

The major problem with people learning information in educational processes is that there is never enough time to teach all the information that could usefully be taught. Even if enough information could be taught, it is certainly not a substitute for thinking. Thinking is critical in the new corporation when the emphasis is placed on the team concept rather than the boss/worker structure. One of the major problems of preparing people for the new information society is that we live in a world that is constantly changing, and there is no one subject or set of subjects that will serve one for the rest of his or her life. So, we must help people learn how to learn and assume an open and receptive attitude toward learning. We must accept learning as a lifelong process.

Re-inventing the corporation will require individuals to be creative. Creativity has been perfectly acceptable in the world of science and art, but up to this point in our industrial society, has been somewhat less prevalent in the business world. Many business corporations are apt to be uncomfortable with creative individuals. These individuals will be sought out by the more progressive corporations. It may take some time for some corporations to adjust to the new team concept where creativity is in demand. However, corporate creativity has worked in the form of idea-

NEEDED SKILLS FOR THE NEW INFORMATION SOCIETY (continued)

spawning sessions for companies like ARCO, IBM, Lockheed, Wells Fargo, and Xerox by teaching employees to approach problems creatively.

The authors make one observation that sums up the approach to new skills for the information society. There is no one education, no one skill, that lasts a lifetime in the new information society. This statement would reinforce the concept of lifelong learning.

The adult education boom is already happening today. And community colleges are in the midst of the adult education programs. The Chicago Tribune recently stated, "Community colleges in Illinois, and the nation, are shedding their image as glorified high schools to become leaders in the retooling of American society for a post-industrial, high technology economy." Most comunity colleges, in all likelihood, have never been "glorified high schools," but may be becoming better understood for what they really can do for adults in lifelong learning processes now that the information society is upon us.

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1. Dr. Matthew Lipman, a professor at Montclair State College, New Jersey, developed a course at Memorial Middle School called Philosophy for School Children which taught thinking to children in grades six through eight.

HEALTH, WOMEN, AND THE INFORMATION SOCIETY CORPORATION

Brenda J. McGolerick

> "In the new information society, human capital has replaced dollar capital as the strategic resource. People and profits are inexorably linked." (Naisbitt, page 4.)

As the preceding quote from Re-inventing the Corporation emphasizes, the success of a corporation in the information society may well be determined by how effectively it can compete for the best people. Two issues facing the information society corporation regarding human resources are employee health and women workers.

From 1960 to 1983, annual health care costs in the United States soared from $27 billion to $360 billion. John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene estimate the annual corporate health bill alone has reached the $100 billion mark. According to Roger Smith, Chairman of General Motors, the Company's largest supplier is not a steel company but Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Michigan. Another example is Hewlett-Packard which has seen its health care costs per employee triple ($500 to $1,500) in only a decade. Realizing their health care costs were increasing at a pace comparable to the federal government, corporations began implementing strategies to curb their medical costs.

One of the strategies being successfully employed by corporations is to hire medical experts to monitor medical treatments. Since 1983, Chrysler Corporation has prescreened foot surgery and has saved an extraordinary $1 million a year while reducing the cost of podiatry services 30 percent (page 184).

Corporations are also auditing their medical bills in an effort to control medical expenses. In a report by the Employee Benefits Research Institute it was found that up to 15 percent of the $100 billion spent annually on employee health insurance was fraudulent. Equifax Services found errors in 38 percent of the bills audited in 1984 (page 183). You can clearly see why it may be beneficial to businesses to audit their medical bills.

Companies are joining forces to combat expenses by forming coalitions. The authors shared the experience of ten Maryland companies -- including three large Baltimore banks -- that have put together a program to review hospital admissions for nonemergency cases. The program is similar to

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Maryland's Medicaid program which has saved the state $10 million. Some companies have gone as far as to build and operate their own clinics. They believe having their own clinic will be only half as expensive as paying the price of local health care. Rather than build a clinic, other companies are choosing to use Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) to control medical costs. Naisbitt and Aburdene state that HMOs are a proven price buster with the advantages of no surprise costs, no bills to audit, and no building your own clinic. They figure by 1990, 40 million people will belong to HMOs. It is interesting to note that Blue Cross currently has HMOs operating in 26 states--a strong indicator of HMO success.

Businessess are advocating improved employee health practices. By encouraging employees to participate in company-sponsored wellness activities, corporations are enjoying a dual payoff -- reduced health care costs and improved employee health. The benefits of having a company-sponsored wellness program are well documented. For example, Lockheed estimates a $1 million annual savings on life insurance premiums alone because of its wellness program. Canada Life Assurance recouped $37,000 in direct savings and noted a turnover decrease that saved $231,000 and a 22 percent reduction in absenteeism (page 197).

How does Hagerstown Junior College fit into the scheme of reducing health care costs? Presently the College is self-insured which, according to Naisbitt and Aburdene, is a definite cost control measure. The College is considering establishing a preadmission hospital testing program and may in the future request a second opinion for some medical procedures. In addition to these measures, a system for auditing medical bills is being discussed. As for employee wellness, the College environment is conducive to promoting health. Employees have available to them the campus, gym, and recreational facilities, as well as educational courses on nutrition and exercise. If the employee chooses, he/she should be able to maintain or improve his/her present health status. It appears that the College is proceeding in the right direction to control or minimize health care costs.

The second issue confronting the information society corporation is the surge of women into the workplace. According to an article in Business Week, women have seized two-thirds of the jobs created in the past decade (page 203). Naisbitt and Aburdene indicate that nearly 55 percent of women

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work as compared to 38 percent in 1960 and 27 percent in 1940. They project by 1995, 60 percent of women will work and predict the women's work force will eventually approach the 75 percent mark, matching their male counterparts in the work market. This prediction is particularly significant in light of the impending baby bust of the 1990's. The Census Bureau forecasts there will be 4.5 million fewer entry-level workers in 1990. The role women will play in shaping the information society corporate environment will be important.

What outcomes can be expected as a result of this influx of women into the male-dominated work force? One prediction is the evolvement of the androgynous manager. It is thought that the androgynous manager will possess the best traditional male and female traits. As the two forces blend, Naisbitt and Aburdene theorize:

> Men and women should learn from one another without abandoning successful traits they already possess. Men can learn to be more collaborative and intuitive, yet remain result oriented. Women need not give up on nurturing in order to learn to be more comfortable with power and conflict (page 207).

Another trend already being evidenced is the decision of working women to delay motherhood. The number of first births to women 30 to 34 between 1972 and 1980 increased 83 percent. For women 35 to 39, first births increased 57 percent (page 209). Coinciding with delayed motherhood is the decrease in time the mother spends at home with the child. Under the Pregnancy Disability Act of 1978, pregnancy is treated like any other medical disability. For this reason women are having their children at a later age when they can afford to stay at home with the child, or they are taking no more than the allowed time off to have their children. The role corporations play in providing day care options or accommodating the working mother will be crucial in the information society, especially when a woman's work life may possibly span the child's entire developmental period.

The third predicted outcome will become a reality as the number of women in the work force increases while the total number of workers declines. The authors think that with the advantage of numbers on their side, women

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(continued)

will finally achieve recognition for their abilities and contributions to the corporate world. This recognition, it is hoped, will result in pay equity. I find it hard to believe that even though the Equal Pay Act became law in 1963, women still have not achieved equal-pay status. James Smith estimates women's wages will only reach 74 percent of men's wages by the year 2000.

The fourth consequence of having a large female work force will be the necessity for corporations to consider alternative work schedules and the previously mentioned day care needs. Efforts such as these will be required of corporations in the information society in order to attract competent female workers. You may think this is catering to a small select group, but in reality, there are just as many women working in the 20's and 30's age group as men in the same age bracket (page 211). Therefore, the corporation responding to the needs of the female worker will reap the benefits of attracting and holding these talented women. Some corporations have experimented with allowing two women to hold the same position on a half-day basis with good success. Nontraditional efforts such as this may become routine in the information society.

With the total number of workers declining in the coming years, corporations will need to meet the competitive challenge not just for their market niche but also for the best people, whether they are male or female. Those businesses willing to break away from tradition will become better places to work, and they will not only survive the impact of the information society but also thrive in this harsh environment.

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Ronald A. Kepple

Re-inventing the Corporation is a difficult book, not to understand but to accept. It is meant to report the trends and to inspire its readers to respond to many challenges. Economists, political observers, and social analysts are predicting dramatic changes in our society and in the western world.

As our society has changed from an agrarian economy to an industrial society, and from an industrial society to a post-industrial society, and recently to a service economy or information society, our rate of social change has accelerated to a dizzying speed. Technological content, diffusion rate, and lately, institutional education, have had a voice in what a culture believes, and in the way that society behaves. Farmers of 150 years or so ago were illiterate for the industrial age, but some of them learned, and almost all their sons learned. While the three R's were a basic and sufficient education, it was realized that more was needed. The Protestant Work Ethic, Taylor's scientific management mentality, and a fresh industrial environment were serving the age well. Industrial workers were not immediately knowledgeable of the post-industrial state which they were ushering in. Graduation from high school was the standard, but more was suggested. The community college movement got well under way early in the second half of the century. To fully realize the political ideals of a democracy and to provide education and trained personnel for the economic sector, hundreds of community colleges were built. In some years in the 1960's community colleges were opening at the rate of more than one a week.

Nineteen-fifty has been identified as a year when America qualitatively changed to a nonrural character.[1] A great industrial machine had produced for a war effort and transformed its energies into domestic production and consumption. For the first time in world history more than one-half of a nation's population was affluent. With two cars in a lot of driveways geographic mobility was symptomatic of other kinds of wandering. Successions of generations began to question a lot of beliefs as they began to experience different commitments to work, different philosophies, and what one sociologist, Sorokin, called a sensate culture.[2] A generation of people were growing up who would not have to do without like their parents had to do. The work ethic was deflated as a motivator. Women, too, would re-enter the marketplace in increasingly large numbers. Working mothers would have two jobs, one at work and one at home. Equality of the sexes would be approached as society implemented Constitutional guarantees

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whose warranties were invoked. The demise of the traditional American family had begun. Sociologists would begin to write at great length about normlessness, estrangement, malaise, in a word, anomie. Marital separation had been disallowed for sacred reasons. Now divorce is permitted for secular expediency. The national divorce rate average is 38 percent.[3]

With this background we are facing the information society when most people are still reeling in a cultural lag created by the industrial age. Demographers have some interesting projections, too. In 1900, the life expectancy for men was 46.6 and for women 48.7. In 1950 it was 66.5 for men and 72.7 for women, and in 1982 it was 71.4 for men and 78.7 for women.[4] So, people are living longer, and their health bills are getting higher. We have more costly diseases. In 1900, the three leading causes of death were pneumonia, tuberculosis, and diarrhea. In 1980, the three leading causes of death were heart disease, cancer, and stroke.[5] As we have seen, Americans have changed their minds about a lot of things -- work, fast food restaurants, marriage, credit cards, religion, community colleges, and leisure time. And they have changed their minds about people, too; they want less of them, especially at home. By 1990, there will be six million fewer teenagers than there were in 1980. There are wide ranging geopolitical implications to this trend, not only for the United States, but for the world. From 1900 to 1950, the Western nations and Japan accounted for roughly 30 percent of the world's population. That figure is now 15 percent. Even assuming a continued decline in the Marxist and Third Worlds, stable rates in the West, and continued immigration into the United States, the West's share will plunge to 9 percent in another 40 years.[6]

For two reasons there will be a seller's market in the information society. First, there will be a general labor shortage because of lower fertility, and second, there will be a shortage of skilled people who can work effectively with the technology required by the information society. It is ironic to point out that for the first time in decades the percentage of high school students going to college has slightly declined.[7]

What is the role of education in all of this? If it is to keep its original function of transmitting the culture and building the knowledge base, if it is going to help to solve social problems, and if it is going to train and educate people for jobs in the highly technological information society, the challenges are many. If it is to help the citizens of the information society to

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION (continued)

live healthy lives within manageable stress levels, if it is going to promote equality, and neutralize illiteracy, then more efforts must be made. To get to a win win situation, education must occur at all levels. The three R's of current implementation, remediation, repetition, and rote, certainly are not enough. Learning to learn and creativity are more the order of the day. Networking must occur at all levels. The curious transformation of corporations into universities into businesses is an analogue for what is going on throughout this society.

Naisbitt and Aburdene recognize the essence and necessity of education. In their summary the place of education is stated eloquently:

> Now that we are putting more and more computers into the schools, the last thing we ought to be doing is eliminating the high touch of music, the arts, drama, and literature. Instead, we ought to be preparing to celebrate a renaissance in the arts in order to balance all the technology we have pumped into this society. It is through the arts that we explore our humanity, our spirituality -- the counterballast to having to live with high technology.[8]

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